

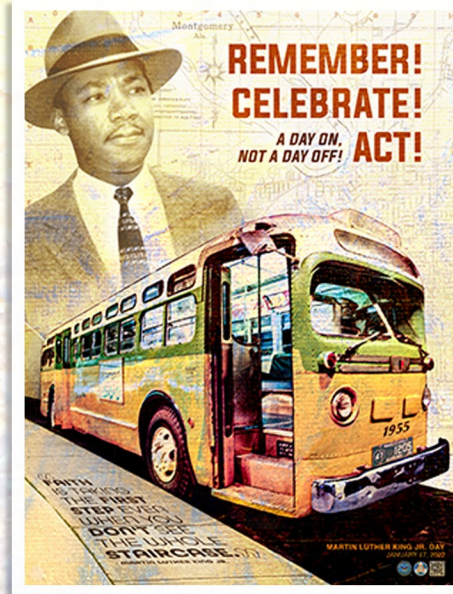
**CULTURAL
AWARENESS**



OBSERVANCE

REMEMBER! CELEBRATE! ACT!

Martin Luther King Jr. Day



FACTS

Each year the Department of Defense (DoD) joins the nation in honoring the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Montgomery Bus Boycott is regarded as the first large-scale U.S. demonstration against segregation. It represents a pivotal moment in the modern American Civil Rights movement. Additionally, it remains one of the most powerful stories of organizing and social change in U.S. history.

In Montgomery, segregation was a part of everyday life. Black people were faced with Jim Crow laws in parks, schools, restrooms, theaters, and buses.

One area of acrimony was the segregation law within the city bus system. The law stated that Black people could not sit in front of the bus, regardless of whether the seats were empty or not. They were required to pay their fares in the front of the bus, then walk to the back door to board the bus.

The campaign lasted from December 5, 1955—the Monday after Rosa Parks, an African-American woman, was arrested for her refusal to surrender her seat to a white person—to December 20, 1956. It ended with the United States Supreme Court's decision that declared the Alabama and Montgomery laws that segregated buses were unconstitutional.

By the end of the boycott, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. entered the national spotlight as a civil rights leader and an inspirational proponent of organized, nonviolent resistance.

The Defense Department understands that freedom, equality, and inclusion are true force multipliers and imperative to national defense and the strength of our nation.

As we remember Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on his birthday, let us continue to live up to the standard he set, ensure his legacy lives on, and, as one DoD family, rise up to meet the challenges that remain.

